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MOUNTAIN RHYTHMS

OR

POEMS OF A MOUNTAINEER

BY

W. J. JENKINS

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PREFACE.

Many friends from time to time, on reading some selection to be found in this little Book, have requested the Author to publish his poems—some of them at least—in book-form, and place them before the public.

Believing that these requests have come from a sincere desire on the part of friends to see such a work, and sharing in this desire to some extent himself, the Author has been constrained to yield; and in offering this little volume—"MOUNTAIN RHYTHMS," OR POEMS OF A MOUNTAINEER—to the reading public, it is with the earnest hope and sincere desire that it may awaken in the minds and hearts of its readers laudable ambitions, and furnish the inspiration through life for better thoughts, higher purposes, and more earnest endeavor.

The Selections run through a variety of subjects, designed to entertain the old as well as the young, and furnish food for mental reflection to all lovers of sentimental and polite literature.

May its truths be as "Bread cast upon the waters, to be gathered after many days," and may it light the pathway of those inquiring souls, who are earnestly searching for the higher life.

W. J. J.

1

Poems Based On the Scriptures

"ONE OF YOU SHALL BETRAY ME."

(Matthew 26:21.)

Due notice had been given at the close of that great feast,
One of the Twelve, called Judas, had gone to see the priest,
To barter away his Master—on signals to agree—
Such consummate deception entails its misery.

Did e'er a friend in treachery hail friend with such a kiss?
Add to crime another crime, and place a curse on bliss?
Ah! better far a millstone around his neck should be,
And know his own eternal doom—the bottom of the sea.

A kiss should seal true friendship, but oh! the burning shame;
They who use it treach'rously entail upon their name!
Silver will buy the Potter's Field—"to bury strangers in"—
Will it free the soul from guilt—the soul all steeped in sin?

So let him to oblivion forever now depart,
And fill the place assigned him—it makes the chill blood start;
He forfeits all that's sacred, the last redeeming trait,
Shuts out himself from Heaven—thus barring Heaven's gate.

"All ye shall be offended because of me this night,
For it is surely written: 'The Shepherd I will smite;
The flock shall all be scattered'—No one to stand by me,
But after I am risen we'll meet in Galilee."

But bold, impetuous Peter declared to Him, "Not so,—
Should any foe assail Thee, my sword shall smite the foe;
I'll never be offended,—I'm ready now to die—
I call Thee now to register my firm resolve on high."

Now when the band came marching, his sword in ready play
Smote off the ear of Malchus, on that eventful day:—
"Put up thy sword," dear Peter, this warning let me give:
"They perish"—all who use it cannot expect to live.

So in the sheath he flung it—that sword had cost him much—
Servant's ear, the Master healed with sympathetic touch;
And thus the hero yielded his sword, his pride, his all,
For when those maidens came around, he then began to fall.

Yes, soon they had him cursing, as men have often done,
Courage gone, and faith grown weak, and trouble just begun;
He saw the Master yielding to what seemed sure his fate,—
Mob, athirst for precious blood, was howling forth its hate.

But next we find him weeping, and crying like a child,
He rued his act of madness—it nearly ran him wild—
Bitter penitence excepted, his tears were like the rain,
The Master's look assured him, and called him back again.

Written in the Spring of 1915.

II

LET CHRIST BE CRUCIFIED.

The Mob was howling fiercely around on every side,
"Away with Him, away with Him—let Christ be crucified;
And give to us Barabbas—murder's a little thing—
But crucify the Master—He claims to be the King."

To Pilate's court they haled Him, that he might there decide,
And give the needed sentence—Let Christ be crucified;
And then they sought for witness, but no one could be found
To testify about His guilt—yet still they had Him bound.

He was no common prisoner, whose crime they might forgive,
They tore their hair, rent their clothes—"He shall no longer live—"
If witnesses were wanting, that lack must be supplied:
They cried the more vehemently, "Let Christ be crucified."

"What need we further witness, when ye yourselves have heard?
He says, 'I am the Son of God'—His own blasphemous word
Is all the witness needed," they cried as with one breath,
"He stands condemned already, let Him be put to death."

But Pilate was not willing—"I find no fault in him—
I see no reason for His death, to satisfy a whim—
Just let me now chastise Him, release, and let Him go";
But to his every pretext, they made one answer,—"No."

Again he did endeavor to plead a righteous cause,
And called to their attention the teaching of their laws;
But o'er his scheme of justice their hellish hate prevailed—
To their dark plans for murder his last objection failed.

"Take heed, ye weak kneed rulers, of danger now beware,
The angry tumult's rising, His guilt you must declare;
If you should thwart our purpose, withholding what we seek,
Know ye, our angry vengance upon yourselves will wreak."

"I find no fault in this man, He stands among the just,
His blood shall be upon you, if take His life you must;
I will not stain my hands with gore, on you shall rest the blame:
Go, take the life of innocence—alas! a burning shame!"

"His blood shall be upon us, and on our children, too,
Just give the needed sentence, is all we ask of you—
From blood, from crime, and remorse, your hands are now absolved;
We'll take this life at any cost—on this we are resolved."

A crown of thorns they platted, and placed upon His head,
And then this selfsame Jesus the Roman soldiers led;
And so they crucified Him, nor counted they the loss,—
Between two thieves they nailed Him upon the rugged cross.

Written in the Spring of 1915.

III

THE RESURRECTION.

Old Judea's hills in sadness were draped as ne'er before,
Faces that beamed with gladness, now bitter anguish bore;
The Master had been arrested, tried by an angry throng,
His innocence attested—"I find in Him no wrong."

And yet they crucified Him, He on the cross was nailed;
In mockery and derision, "King of the Jews" they hailed:
He died the death for mankind—'t was God's eternal plan,
In expiation for our sins, that Man should die for man.

The earth was soon in darkness, and reeling to and fro,
Temple rocking, hills were rent, and caverns gaping low;
An earthquake shook the kingdoms—it rent the rocks in twain—
Terror filled the hearts of men, when Christ, the Lord, was slain.

"Eloi sabachthani," in yielding up the ghost,
He called upon the Father— not for angelic host,
But for His own approval, as God's eternal Son;
"Alone I drink the bitter cup—for man salvation's won."

And now the graves were opened, and saints, though dead for years,
Were seen in the city walking, as from the word appears;
In Jerusalem we find them, and regions round about,—
That they were seen by many, there is but little doubt.

But in that lonely sepulchre, the Lord of glory lay,
All hope was buried with Him, disciples gone away;
The Roman soldiers guarding, lest some His body take,—
Stone was rolled, the Roman seal—'t was death by law to break.

But reeling back as dead men, we see those soldiers fall;
For fear and consternation had seized them like a pall:
The angel had descended to roll the stone away,
To break the spell of darkness, and usher in new day.

O gladness, joy, and triumph! the Lord has risen now,
Trampled darkness under foot—a crown upon His brow;—
Was ever news more thrilling? Did light from darkness shine?
One shout all Nature filling—"Christ lives the life Divine"!

O, weary souls in darkness, come see the risen Lord:
He paid your debt on Calvary, rely upon His word:
Boon of life awaits us all, to Him our faith shall cling;
Our hearts go out in gratitude to our Redeemer, King.

Parts I. and II. were written as an introduction to this poem, which was written in the Spring of 1915.

GOD'S CHOSEN LAND IS FREE.

Israel's hosts were marshaled by Elah's fertile vale,
In line of battle waiting, Philistines to assail;
Their foes were near Azekah, in battle line array,
Waiting there in readiness to join in mortal fray.

Now each one feared the other, each waited for the foe
To take the lead offensive, strike first decisive blow;
The leaders hesitated to wage a conflict right,—
Seemed the while too cowardly in Freedom's cause to fight.

Saul's valor had departed—all but his coat of mail—
What use this mighty armor, no courage to assail
The foe that still menances, defies the arms of God,
And offers terms to rule them with the oppressor's rod?

The heart of Saul had failed him in this great time of need,
For courage, and for valor, God's cause began to bleed;—
Yes, the King's heart had failed him, and yet a righteous cause
Was calling loud for vengeance to vindicate her laws.

But no one dared to enter against Goliath's skill—
He browbeat Israel's army, defying them at will—
He seemed a mighty champion, moved with towering height,
Threatened vengeance as he strode the fields in search of fight.

"Send ye a man to meet me, and let us two decide
Which one shall serve the other, where each one shall abide;
The man who slays Goliath will conquer all our host—
No need to slaughter armies, or fight from post to post.

"Come on ye brave, I call you, and fight with me this day!
Name ye your man to meet me, why tremble with dismay?
Why linger hesitating, your cause already lost?
You are a band of cowards, to make of you the most."

Perchance a man from Bethlehem sent out his ruddy son,
To mingle with his brethern and see what had been done;
Just when he came the battle lined up on either side,—
He heard Goliath's taunting, Israel's God defied.

He shouted for the battle, and for the cause he loved,
Then along the battle line, from side to side he moved;
Insult to Israel's army, he could no longer bear,—
To meet this mighty champion, he then would even dare.

And when he heard the offer his farther's house to free,
Along with other riches, whatever they might be,
And that the sweet-faced Michal should be his own dear wife,
He planned in deadly conflict to take that Giant's life.

"Ye men of Israel listen, for by your cause I'll stand,
I'll meet this boasting Giant and free God's chosen land;
I'll smite him sure and certain—let no man be afraid—
The armies of the living God should never be dismayed."

And then to Saul they hastened, his sanction to obtain,
Before the conflict opened on Elah's battle plain;—
More noted for discretion than valor's fighting trim,
Saul answered: "No, no, my lad, you cannot fight with him."

"He is a noted warrior and you a ruddy youth—
The man who fights this Giant must be a man in truth";
But David grew more anxious and told a hunting tale,
How o'er a bear and lion his strength did once prevail.

"Let no man's heart now fail him—this is no time for fear—
Accept the challenge, make the terms, for Israel I'll appear:
The Lord stands by His people, who in His cause doth fight;
He'll drive our foes before us, for we are in the right.

"Just let me meet Goliath and prove our cause is just,
And teach the world the lesson, that in our God we trust;
I know that I shall conquer—why need we wait and pause?
The Lord will fight His battle,—there surely is a cause."

His heart was beating higher, his courage seemed more bold;
Saul's valor long departed, came back like days of old:
Else he saw no other hope, save in this ruddy youth,—
'Twas either fight, or send a man—the world must know the truth.

Saul armed him with his armor, and with his coat of mail,
Then he girded on the sword Philistine to assail;
And Saul's permission granted, he assayed then to go,
But found that under such a load his movement was too slow.

He laid aside the armor contrived for his defence,
Took his staff and shepherd bag, then used his commonsense,
To get the stones best suited to match his trusted Sling;
And thus he went to battle, in name of God and King.

Out came the Giant ranting, and calling for a man;
For forty days and longer, this was his cherished plan;
None yet had dared to meet him—now is his time of fun—
He sees the ruddy David come quickly on the run:

And as he ran he placed a stone in that triumphant Sling,
And with such force he hurled it, in name of God and King,
That—Ho, my comrades! courage.—See whizzing through the air.—
With bated breath in silence the army breathes a prayer.

See Goliath reel and fall,—that stone its mark had found—
In a moment stretched he lay, weltering on the ground;
Our hero leaped upon him, and snatched the Giant's sword,
Smote off his head as trophy that he had kept his word.

And then a shout of victory went up from Elah's plain—
"Israel's God is with us, that Giant has been slain;—
Go shout ye mighty warriors—the Lord has found a man
To conquer those who hate us, remove the coward's ban.

"Go shout!—Our foes are fleeing!—See! they are on the run!—
We'll follow them, and rout them, even down to Ekron;
Then to this land we'll hasten, and shout a jubilee—
Praise the Lord, His chosen Land is now among the free."

Written during the Spring and Summer of 1915.

"A FRIEND I'LL BE TO YOU."

There were two friends in olden time,
  Their hearts beat strong and true;
They vowed to each: "In every clime,
  A friend I'll be to you."

This vow was made each kneeling down—
  I think they meant it too:—
"In poverty, or in renown,
  A friend I'll be to you."

They both had foes, and likewise friends—
  The one was Jesse's son,
Anointed king to make amends
  For what the king had done;

But ere he to the kingdom came,
  And donned the regal crown,
He fought a battle winning fame—
  Both glory and renown.

There was a man that did abide
  In Gath, or somewhere near;
He caused the Israelites to hide,
  And filled their hearts with fear.

But David met this champion,
  And slew him on the plain;
It filled the heart of Jonathon
  With love that did remain.

It was a deed, heroic, brave,
  It set the realm on fire;—
"Our foes are dead and in the grave,
  Awake the living lyre."

The women sang his praise and name.
  He gave but little heed;
But plodded on the road to fame,
  By Providence decreed.

He had one thought, and one alone,—
  That was to serve the king;—
His heart not fixed upon the throne,
  Nor any selfish thing.

The king to keep a promise true,
  This compromise did make:
"If you will fight these battles through,
  My daughter you shall take."

"My father's house of low estate,
  Not fit to match with thine;
The great should mingle with the great,
  At Cupid's golden shrine.

"If I had gold—I must confess—
  And presents rich to give,
It were a source of happiness,
  In royal court to live."

"It is no dower that I ask—
  My foes have done me wrong—
One hundred foreskins is the task,
  She shall to you belong."

"Agreed, I'll enter now the strife,—
  Your foes are mine the same;—
No better chance to win a wife,
  Than fight in Israel's name."

The battle fought, our hero won,
  Nor did he longer wait;
But with the victor's spoils marched on,
  With pride and step elate.

His heart was beating quick and fast,
  It swelled with honest pride;
His joy seemed all too good to last,—
  He soon would have his bride.

"Here is the price, you ask, twice taled,
  You cannot ask for more;
Your plan to have me slain has failed—
  My prize, I now implore."

"I will not parley, nor debate
  The claim you prove so well;
For Merab's hand you are too late,—
  She goes to Adriel.

"Dear Michal loves you much, they say,
  For what I know, 'tis true:
Come, take her now, and go thy way,—
  A snare she'll prove to you."

He took her hand with honest joy,
And pride too great to tell;
His bliss seemed perfect, no alloy—
The strife has ended well.

Ah! I mistake, the strife's not o'er,
It has just now begun;
The king began to plan the more,
And put him on the run.

And then again his friend he sought,
To know what he had done;
His daily life with danger fraught
Was now a dreary one.

Now Jonathon, the king's own son,
Was prince of some renown;
'Twas thought when Saul his race had run,
His son would take the crown

But fate works on in many ways—
'Tis God's own perfect plan—
If man His will and word obeys,
The Lord will find the man.

The prince's robe he freely gave,
Nor yet withheld his sword:
"Remember me, 'tis all I crave—
This is my parting word."

"When you have come to take the crown,—
As take the crown you must—
Give to my house some slight renown,
Though I be in the dust.

"A band around my father's court—
Most hateful to his cause—
Constantly bring some vile report,
To gain his own applause.

"Come on my friend, and kneel with me,
Our friendship we'll renew—
My father is the king, you see,
He means to slaughter you.

"And though it seems as treachery,
Thus to reveal his plan,
Our vow I'll keep most faithfully—
Remove the traitor's ban.

"Now go thy way, and may our God
  Watch o'er and shelter you;
May you find comfort in His rod—
  Adieu, my friend, adieu!"

By Ezel's Rock the two friends part,
  Their hearts still warm and true;
Grief's bitter tears afresh did start—
  "A friend, I'll be to you."

Now David hides in rocks and caves—
  The warriors compass round;
He trails before the noted braves,
  Like fox before the hound.

They search the hills, they search the vales,
  Their plans did wisdom lack;
For when in sight, Saul's valor fails—
  The Lord has turned him back.

The prince returned to cheer his friend—
  In Ziph they did renew—
"My consolation, let me lend,
  And be a friend to you.

"Thou shalt be king in Israel,
  I shall be next to you:"
So sworn, they part and bid farewell
  To each, "My friend, adieu!"

Was this a farewell truly said?
  And should they meet no more?
Yes, soon the king his warriors led
  To battle, fierce and sore.

His foes, they climbed Gilboa's height,
  And spread destruction round;
Among the dead—a shocking sight—
  Saul and his sons were found.

Thy friend, O David! has been slain,
  His blood will seal it now;
Between his seed and thine remain
  Friendship's unbroken vow.

"O, Jonathon! my friend! my friend!
  How can I give thee up?
No heart its sympathy to lend,
  'Tis sorrow's bitter cup!

"O friend! from thine abode of rest,
Come cheer my weary heart!
I know thy home is with the blest—
O, were I where thou art!

"Thy love, more strong than woman's love,
While here on earth was mine:
What shall it be in realms above,
Where now it is divine?

"This throne that fate hath given me,
Though but an empty thing—
I would exchange it all for thee,
Could this thy presence bring.

"My soul in deep distress for thee,
Thy love, I crave the more;
So pleasant hast thou been to me,
What can I now adore?

"My friend is gone, some wicked hand
Has dealt the fatal blow;—
He fought for God's own chosen land—
O, God! why is it so?

"He was so good, so true, so brave,—
Unselfish to the core—
Why now consign him to the grave,
His presence known no more?

"Could I have fallen in his place,
And he be in my stead,
This crown were worn with better grace—
Adorn more worthy head.

"God, in Thy mercy, still look down,
In pity on me now;
Help me for him to wear this crown,
While to Thy will I bow."

Written during the summer of 1915, and dedicated to Trimont Lodge No. 249, I. O. O. F., Franklin, N. C.

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD.

Psalm 23.

"The Lord is my Shepherd, no want shall I know,"
His goodness doth follow wherever I go;
Amid the green pastures, He maketh me lie down,
Where peace, love, and mercy, my pathway shall crown.

Away from life's cares, where the still waters glide,—
No tempests do gather, no evils abide—
The flock He is leading in perfect control,—
Away from temptation, there's rest for the soul:

I meditate freely with none to molest,
His mercy still leading for whate'er is best;
His angels are guarding, lest I go astray,
And stumble in darkness and lose the right way.

Like sheep should I wander, my soul He'll restore,
And bring back my footsteps to stray nevermore;
In paths of the righteous He guides me aright,
When dark shadows gather, He sheds forth His light.

In death's darksome valley, Thy comforting rod
Adds fresh inspiration—faith looks up to God;
Though evils are many, yet none will I fear—
The Lord leads me onward, He stays ever near.

And, if through that valley He calls me to walk,
His grace will uphold me, though dark evils stalk;
I know they'll not harm me—His promise abides,—
It cheers me and beckons my soul o'er the tides.

Before those who hate me His table is spread,
On life's richest viands my soul shall be fed;
His goodness and mercy shall crown all my days,—
In His house I shall dwell forever, always.

1915.

"THE LAW OF MEDES."

A-has-u-e-rus made a feast—
It was a grand affair —
Princes and nobles of the East,
From far and near were there:
He sat in Shushan on the throne,
His kingdom to parade;
When nigh two hundred days were gone,
Another feast was made.

The Shushan Palace, draped in green,
To match with blue and white,—
Lovelier sight hath ne'er been seen—
A picture of delight;
In marble pavement blue and red
With black and white combine,
The hangings and each golden bed
Were set with linen fine.

This latter feast the small, the great,
For seven days attend,
To get a glimpse of royal state,
High life to comprehend;
The high, the low, the rich, the poor,
And all in Shushan found,
Were welcomed at the king's own door,
And all the Palace round.

The royal wine from golden bowl,
They drank to heart's content;
The women joined with heart and soul,
And royal beauty lent:
Vashti, the queen, the hostess played,
And placed them all at ease;
Her beauty, fair, with jewels laid
Was sure the crowd to please.

The king was flushed with royal wine—
As all the world must know—
And ordered Vashti brought in line,
To make a foolish show
Before the princes of his court,
That they her beauty see;—
But she objected to this sport—
She felt some modesty.

True, she was fair to look upon,
To men of sober thought;
But, if she sat and posed alone,
The show would go for naught:
The crowd, she knew, was full of wine,
Too much for modest grace;
She would not be the last in line,
To show her jeweled face.

The riches of the kingdom shown,
It seemed so out of place
Thus to humiliate the throne,
To show the king her grace:
She was a modest queen, you see,
Of rank and wealth not vain;—
No need to roll in revelry—
Her smiles and charms remain.

A wealth of beauty was her own,
But not for foolish show;
Before the crowd and drunken drone,
She did refuse to go:
No precedent she meant to set,
Nor yet to slight the king;
She thought, when sober, he'd regret
What could no honor bring.

But to the wise men he applied,
To know the Persian law;
They fancied wrongs on every side,
And dangers, great, foresaw:—
Now, should this story come abroad—
As come abroad it must—
Man's right to rule has been outlawed,—
As well be in the dust.

"When everything was going right,
The world turned upside down,
My merry heart yet craved one sight,—
The queen in royal crown:—
She did refuse the king's command
To let my princes see;
What shall be done to save the land
From this false modesty?"

Me-mu-can did contrive the plan,
To which they all agreed.—
"Let every house be ruled by man;"—
And so the king decreed:
Vashti the queen should come no more,
Before the king so great,
Who once her beauty did adore,
But lose her royal state.

Yes, man must rule his house and wife,
  She shall obey his whims,
Or bring disgrace upon her life,
  And work with tired limbs;
His will, the wife must seek to know,
  Attend to all his needs,—
Decreed by king long years ago—
  This is the "Law of Medes."

'Tis well that sage is in his grave,
  With all who did agree
To make the loyal wife the slave,
  To please his Majesty:
On that good day they played the fool,
  And wrote some silly creeds—
"Man his house and wife must rule,"—
  But 'tis the Law of Medes.

If he had formed another plan,
  He would be living yet;—
"Let woman have the rule o'er man"—
  No sting of deep regret:
Me-mu-can, and Car-she-na too,
  Shame on your wicked lives:
You'll suffer on the ages through
  For what you've done for wives.

But, if some man of modern thought
  Would get himself a name,
And bring this ancient plan to naught,
  He'd blaze the way to fame;
He'd gain from wife, and maiden too,
  Full praise for all his deeds,
If he would write the creed anew,
  And change this "Law of Medes."

"ABSTAIN FROM ALL APPEARANCE OF EVIL."

I. Thes. 5:22.

Appearance of the evil shun, in everything you do;
For habits formed while you are young will last a lifetime through:
In early life, then make them right,—if passions gain control,
They blast the hope, they curse and blight, condemn and sink the soul.

Appearance of the evil shun, keep straight ahead in view,
When once the race you have begun, continue right on through;
Pursue the path from day to day, and all your acts control,
For they who linger on the way will never reach the goal.

Appearance of the evil shun, rush on the weary way,
Life's work and toil must all be done to reach eternal Day;
The race all run, you find the prize you feign would seek and win,
Then struggle on, the vict'ry lies in life that's free from sin.

Appearance of the evil shun, in thought, in word, in deed,
If streams from out the fountains run, their course we always heed;
We do not see them upward climb, but gently they descend,
To cleanse the vale—ah thought sublime—and verdant beauty lend.

Appearance of the evil shun, for if our hearts be pure,
Life's fountains on increasing run—our barque will safely moor—
Hope's anchor cast, we steadfast stand, by faith in Him we love,
Upon the brink of Heaven's strand to join the hosts above.

Appearance of the evil shun, the Master keep in view,
That when the stream has overflown, and spread the valleys through,
No poisoned breath, nor sting of pain, can mar the upright life,
Or change one note in music's strain from harmony to strife.

Appearance of the evil shun, be sure the fountain's pure;
For evil thoughts and actions done—though often they allure—
They never gain a single prize, but freeze and dwarf the soul,
And turn it downward from the skies, for Satan to enroll.

Appearance of the evil shun, let good your life inspire,
Do not allow the Evil One your thoughts and acts to hire;
The only wage he ever pays for sins that we commit,
Is pain, or death, or endless days in that infernal pit.

Appearance of the evil shun, the Master's words obey,
Don't wander into paths unknown, but walk the narrow way,
That leads the trav'ler to the goal, reflecting light that's given,
To guide his feet, to lift the soul, and land him safe in Heaven.

Appearance of the evil shun, life's toil will soon be o'er,
And when the race is fully run, you'll see on that bright shore
A Saviour stand, with outstretched hand, to lift you from the strife,
And place a crown upon your head—Crown of Eternal Life.

Sentimental Poems

MY LITTLE DOG, "TRACK."

PART I.

Dear little Dog, you're growing old,
  You love to lie around;
If days are hot, or days are cold,
  You sleep so very sound
You hear the children call no more,
  Nor romp with them at play;—
In truth, this life will soon be o'er,
  And you'll be gone for aye.

You've ceased to chase the squirrels round,
  The rabbits feel no fear;
They see you moving up and down,—
  Perhaps you do not hear
Them laugh to see you limping pass
  The trails, where near they hide,
By drooping weeds, or tangled grass,
  And leap from side to side.

The time has been, when they would dread
  To see you pass along,
Or hear you bark, when they had fled,
  The thorns and briers among;
But now they know your're old and frail,
  With limbs all growing stiff:
You run half sidewise on the trail,
  And tumble o'er the cliff.

But we've been friends—yes, you and I—
  And still you watch me work;
My coat to guard around you lie,—
  No, you will never shirk:—
But ready still at duty's call,
  Across the fields you'll hie;
And watch and wait till shadows fall,
  And sunshine quits the sky.

And when the shadows flood the fields.—
  Work, for the day, is done—
The curfew, ringing out appeals
  To all, "The setting sun,"

I see you wag that bushy tail,
  Now glad the toil is o'er;
But gladder still, you did not fail
  To guard me as of yore.

Your presence keeps the beasts away,
  For in your troubled dreams,
You sometimes bark, and sometimes bay,
  And try to talk, it seems,
To tell of dangers groping near,
  And warn me for the strife;
Or else of pleasures free from fear,
  And joys that crowd your life.

When you have done your duty well,
  I see how proud you feel;
That which your tongue can never tell,
  Your little acts reveal:
And, like your master, too, a word
  Of kind applause you crave;—
It brightens life, though seldom heard,
  Before we reach the grave.

And when I come from far away,
  Where I have been for months,
It is a treat to see you play,
  And do your little stunts;
You seem so glad to see me come,
  I know I have one friend,
Whose friendship changes not like some
  Who do their faith pretend.

Yes, you've been true, your acts sincere,
  There's nothing to forgive;
For bread and meat you need not fear,
  So long as we shall live:
Just lie around and take your rest,
  You need not join the throng;
But do the things that you like best,—
  You may not be here long.

Life's duties do the hours beguile,
  The journey we'll pursue;
But twenty years is quite a while
  For little dogs like you:
And, now, the time is drawing near,
  I, too, shall quite the strife;
The spirit beckons to me here,—
  "Accept eternal life."

Let's travel on as we have done—
  Friends wait the will of Time—
And when we reach life's setting sun,
  And hear the angels chime
The chords of friendship, and of love,
  Where glit'ring crowns doth shine,
We'll catch the higher strains above,
  And earthly cares resign.

Written in the Summer of 1915.

MY LITTLE DOG, "TRACK."

PART II.

You remember the promise made you,
  Concerning "bread and meat"—
I'll try to keep that promise true—
  Just come along and eat:
These dainty bits will give you life,
  And make your limbs more strong;
They'll fit you better for the strife,
  And thus your life prolong.

You mince along in such a way,
  I fear your strength will fail;
You cannot romp, you cannot play,
  Nor crouching beasts assail—
What! Don't like biscuit, nor the cake
  You used to love so well?
Then here's some pie, come, freely take
  Meats baked to suit your smell.

One morn I missed him from the board,
  And from his well filled plate,
But thought his strength he meant to hoard,
  By sleeping long and late;—
"Halloo!"—that voice its evil bore,
  Its cadence filled my heart;
I listened, breathless, by the door
  For what it would impart.

"Halloo," the passionate voice wailed,
  "Track lies beside the road;
His little strength has nearly failed,
  He moved not when I strode
Along the pathway where he lies,
  And struggles hard for breath,
Half conscious, though it seems he tries
  To ward the sting of death."

Yes, sure enough, it evil brings,
But quick I'll go and see;
And out I rushed as if on wings,
And straight as flies the bee,
I ran to where he welt'ring lay
And stroked his little back,
As often I had done in play,
And called, "My little Track."

And then he scrambled to his feet,
And wagged his little tail,
And upward looked—his joy complete,
That friendship did not fail:—
He rubbed about my legs a spell,
He knew I shared his pain;
He tried to tell me, "All is well"—
Nor did he try in vain.

"My friend has come to see me die—
That hand seems quite divine—
My all to clay—the moments fly—
I willingly resign:
I could not bear to pass alone,
Without some beacon bright;
Your presence, like the stars, has shone
Death's valley full of light.

"I now can bid this earth adieu,
My race is fully run;
My joy will last the ages through—
I hear you say, 'Well done:'
Ne'er words so precious to my ear,
They buoy my soul in death—
Sufficient passport, free from fear,
I yield life's fleeting breath,

"To know I've served my master well,
And been his steadfast friend—
What need I care where I shall dwell?—
This thought will pleasure lend.
To feel my acts, my life approved—
O Grave! What have you won?
Your caverns gilded, dark removed,
Out shine life's setting sun.

"I see the rays serenely bright;
They gild the farther shore,
And lure me on to realms of light;
I hear the dipping oar:

The Boatman comes, he calls for me
To cross life's ebbing tide;
My eyes grow dim—farewell to thee—
Under his wing I'll hide."

He laid him down without regret,—
I stroked his back in vain—
And quietly as the sun e'er set,
His life went out amain:
Life's duty done, now ends the strife,
This bright, autumnal day;
I tried to coax him back to life,
But he was gone for aye.

His little grave the hill-top near,
Where sun shines soon and late,
Will point the sportsman, rambling here,—
Unless some cruel fate
Should trample down the marks of Time,
And desecrate the place,—
Where flowers bloom and vines entwine,
Where sleeps his little Grace.

The thought comes oft, it lingers still,—
"My acts, my life approved"—
And do I strive my Master's will—
All selfishness removed—
To carry out as faithfully
As "Track" obeyed my own,
That when the summons comes to me,—
Oh, shall I hear "Well done?"

My little Dog died, November 9th, 1915, being 20 years old; I buried him and wrote the above lines to his memory.

TREACHERY OF THE PIONEERS.

O, Treachery of the years agone!—
The pioneers crossed the tide,
And sheltered in the rude wigwam,
By the Indian's fireside.

They shared the Indian's venison,
And they played a clever hand—
Some little trinkets and wampum,
And they took the Indian's land.

Yes, sure, a treacherous scoundrel,
Claiming his friendship true;
Renouncing race-ties and kindred,
He paddled the bark canoe:

He ate poor Indian's venison,
  Pretending to share his fate—
In truth, the wily Bonython†
  Was buying the Indian's hate.

How sweet the Indian's venison!
  He smoked the pipe of peace,
And vowed for Indian's friendship,
  His own should never cease.

"Give me the lands to the River—
  I crave this land, in truth—
And the generous hearted giver
  Shall have my bonny Ruth.‡

"She'll weave your wampum, cheer your life,
  And guard your wigwam door;
She'll broil your fish, and be your wife,
  For aye, and evermore.

"From Sachem's hand, I crave the land,
  Far as the Foxwell Brook;
And all around on every hand,
  Far as the eyes can look.

"Here, taste this flask, and seal the chart
  That binds us all as one;—
No sachem has a bigger heart,
  Than has the wise Megone.*"

The Sachem drank the fire-water;—
  It set his brain awhirl:
He saw the pale-faced daughter
  The beauty of the world.

"From Brook to the rolling Saco,
  Where val'rous deeds were wrought;
Where the war-song's thrilling echo—
  These lands were dearly bought.

"My own—the blood of my fathers,—
  These scars, I carry round,
Have paid the price of these altars,
  Built on this sacred ground.

"But, ye Saco Lands, no longer,
  I'll roam thy hills so dear!—
There's one whose charms are stronger
  Than all that's sacred here:

"For her I yield this goodly Land—
O Father, Supreme, forgive!—
Poor Indian loves this fair, sweet maid,
More than he loves to live.

"The wicked Scamman's* scalp I took,
Who wronged this forest child;
And sent his soul—by good forsook—
To dwell with demons wild.

"This wrong avenged, she'll cleave to me,
And with me she'll abide;
As trophy of sweet victory—
She'll be my bonny bride.

"Farewell, dear lands of the Saco!—
Thy vales and streams I love;
No more shall the hilltops echo
The songs of my cooing dove.

"I'll sign the Deed, and give the land,
And Sagamore John† shall be
My good white father—understand,
This vow is made by three."

Yes, Ruth approves, and gives consent,
Though tears bedim her eyes,—
Her father on such treachery bent—
To make such sacrifice.

The Deed now signed, John's flask well drained,
Mogg lies upon the floor—
A drunken wretch—all that remained,
Of what he was before.

The hour has come, what further use
Can Sachem be to John,
Who seeks to find some vain excuse,
To slay his friend, Megone?

But, as he placed his loaded gun
Close up to Indian's ear,
And took good aim—Hell's voice cried out,
"Hold John, the wolves may hear.

"This deed in silence must be done—
Conceal thy act in time:
You have the land;—your crime begun—
Commit a double crime!"

From out his belt, his knife he draws—
His gun is thrown aside;—
He kneels beside the Chief in pause,
And ope's his bosom wide:

But when he essays knife to raise,
His arms are palsied grown;—
"Take Mogg's life? No—in former days,
'Twas Mogg who saved my own."

Unconscious Mogg! Couldst thou but know,
On what now hangs thy fate,
Thy arm would nerve to strike one blow,
To 'venge this scoundrel's hate.

Beware, O Mogg! Ruth takes the knife—
She smiles, but ah!—remember—
She'll free her pledge to be thy wife—
Remember, Mogg—remember!

Beware of woman when she smiles,
For something lurks within her;
When time is rife, her wary wiles
Sometimes make her a sinner.

The knife is plied, the blood runs red;
Again the knife goes deeper—
Oh, horrors!—now the soul has fled,
Ere death awakes the sleeper!

The door swings back, its creaking hinge
Now drowns her footsteps quite;
The blazing fire-light serves to fringe,
And darken the gloom of night.

She leaves the scene, John calls in vain;
For he fears to be alone,—
Where hellish deeds and thoughts remain—
With the lifeless—dead—Megone.

She wanders out 'neath darkened skies,
O'er hills, and vales, and plains;
But spectral forms before her eyes
In hideous shapes remain.

Oh! where's the nook by man forsook,
Where the soul alone with God,
Can wait and plead for one kind look,
Under His chastening rod?

But, Ruth, if the books were open,
And the Judge read, clear and strong,
The acts,—and the words there spoken—
Say, does conscience serve thee wrong?

I know that a sainted mother
Still pleads for her wayward child;
That the sins of a fallen father
Will sometimes make one wild:

A fallen father schemed and planned,—
In ways too dark to own—
To steal poor Sachem's life and land,
And hide two crimes in one.

But, were they hid? No, no—not that,
Though John esteemed them clever—
A traitor's deeds, where angels sat—
They'll blur the books forever.

If all the facts we understand,
The deeds that you committed,
To free you from this deal for land,
Can be condoned and pitied.

The bride of Mogg, thus doomed to live
A life so illy mated—
The bosom shrinks—O God forgive;
Free us from all we've hated!

A wanderer from land to land,
Through vales, o'er hills, and mountains;
And then along the desert sand,
And reigns supreme in power?

And by the sparkling fountains:
Hast thou not found some spot ere this—
Some secret nook and bower—
Where solitude seems perfect bliss,

By rippling brook, by wooded dell,
Thy feet have strayed till weary;
No mortal knows, nor tongue can tell,
How much of guilt you carry:

It may be less, and it may be more;
And it may be none at all—
One thing we know—when time is o'er,
You'll answer the final call.

I leave thee 'gainst that maple tree,
Where the squirrels romp and play;
Where the blackbirds chatter merrily,
In the river's washing spray:

'Gainst that maple in woodland dell,
Where Castine* found thee leaning,—
Sleep—rest unbroken by dream or spell—
In slumber's deepest meaning.

Written in June, 1917.

I am indebted to Whittier's "Mogg Megone" for the inspiration voiced in the above.

*Mogg Megone, a leader and powerful Chief among the Saco Indians.

†John Bonython, an outlawed white man, who made his home among the Indians—His epitaph reads: "Here lies Bonython, the Sagamore of Saco, He lived a rogue, and died a knave, and went to Hobomoko."

‡Ruth Bonython, John's fair and beautiful daughter, was passionately loved by Mogg Megone; and her father took advantage of this to obtain a large Grant of land along the Saco River.

*Captain Scamman, supposed to have wronged Ruth, which wrong is avenged by Mogg.

*Baron de Castine who settled among the Penobscot Indians, and took for his wives the daughters of Modocawando, a most powerful Indian Chief of the East.

War Time Poems

"YOU SHALL NOT RULE THE WORLD."

Old Mother England's fighting far out across the sea,
Along with France, our sister, to make the whole world free:
For sure the German Kaiser has spread his banners wide—
He means to rule the empire, and all the world beside.

The haughty Prussian rallies the Austrian and the Huns,
And pours a deadly fire from out his biggest guns:
But Johnny's sticking to 'em, he's fighting far and wide,
He routs them from the trenches—France standing by his side.

The Hohenzollern's going, but Freedom in his stead
Will lift her blood-bought banner high o'er the tyrant's head:
His star has reached its glory, his power's on decline—
Democracy will shatter his boasted Right Divine.

The Hohenzollern's going, he soon must say, Farewell,
And bid adieu to "Kultur that's made on earth a hell;"
For Uncle Sam has sworn it, his banner 's unfurled,
These words inscribed upon it: "You shall not rule the world."

We do not want your Empire,—and you shall surely have
A chance, with other nations, beside the Russian Slav,
To work a noble destiny,—if that shall be your aim—
Your right Divine exploded—be careful what you claim.

You've slain our wives and children, a traitor proved to man—
For this our nation's coming with gun and sword in hand:
They clamor loud for vengeance,—in Freedom's name we come;—
You'll hear our cannon roaring, the beating of our drum.

Get ready German Kaiser, get ready for the fray!
We're coming o'er to see you, we're coming there to stay
Till Justice has been wrested from out the despot's hand,
And Freedom firmly planted in every Nation's land.

The prayer of stricken Belgium has reached the God on high,
And Uncle Sam will meet you, on land, and sea, and sky:
For all your hellish treachery you'll surely have to pay;—
The Nations' sacred Compacts shall mean, to man, Fair Play.

Now, listen, German Kaiser!—unless you court distress,
You better look about you for plans to make redress
For all the wrongs committed, on land, and on the seas;
For vengeance, calling for you, is riding on the breeze.

Yes, listen, German Kaiser! we're coming Nation strong,
To win for earth her freedom, and rid the world of wrong:
A Nation proud of battles, and, too, its well-earned fame,
Cries, Down with every tyrant!—Go, fight in Freedom's name!

Just write it down—We're coming—ne'er think we are in joke—
You'll hear our cannon booming—you, too, will smell the smoke;
And when the battle's over, and smoke has cleared away,
You'll know that we have been there—No more despotic sway.

Written in December, 1917.

THEIR BLOOD CRIES OUT AGAINST YOU.

Remember, Bill, I told you, that we were coming there,
To straighten up your Empire, plant Freedom everywhere:
Your acts had reached the zenith of all that's base and mean;
To tolerate them longer, would surely be a sin.

You know full well I told you, about the battle's smoke,
And tried to make you realize—it was not said in joke;
But still, you would not listen, nor heed a word I said,
Till now—you know for certain, your realm has surely bled.

I tried to speak with candor—not boastful, to be sure—
I knew your hellish treach'ry, we could not long endure:
You've tried all sorts of ruses, to cover up your hate,—
And, now, to save the Fatherland, you feign would abdicate.

The flower of your manhood, you've sacrificed in vain,
To brace the Hohenzollern, that he might still remain;
But Hohenzollern's going, he soon must read his doom,
If e'er his faithful subjects, to liberty shall come.

We've sent our manhood over,—on them we can rely—
To meet your boasted power, on land, and sea, and sky:
"Mine Got" has quite forsaken, and every mother's Hun,
Before the Allied Armies, seems now upon the run.

But there's no use in running, for justice overtakes
The wretch, who scatters horror till every nation quakes:
Your sins will all be punished, for vengeance is the Lord's,
To meet out retribution—you'll hear the clash of swords.

Just what will happen to you, when you have been arraigned,
Before the Bar of Justice—with all that you have slain,
To testify against you, for all your brutal acts—
Your disregard for Nations, and all their solemn pacts,—

I'm sure I cannot tell you; but there's a righteous Judge,
To pass upon your conduct—He's free from hate and grudge:
He holds the balance for you, the record of your life,—
Nor will He hold him guiltless, whose deeds with sin are rife

He knows your hands are dripping, He sees the blood run down,
The blood of stricken Belgium, that stained your royal crown;
The blood of helpless children still blacker crime attests,—
The oceans, red with carnage, the submarine infests.

If you had taken counsel, and let the ships go free,
You could have fought your battles, on land and on the sea:
We never cared to bother, in such a family row,
But were content to leave you to show each other how.

But when the ships were sinking, and daily sacrifice
Of lives, by ruthless warfare, our ire began to rise;
It rose to heights of vengeance,—the helpless you have slain
Will rise, condemn, and curse you, so long as you remain.

Your word can ne'er be taken to placate all your wrong—
For, sure, the devil dreads you, though you to him belong:
You've outraged all that's sacred, but if to pray you choose,
Get on your knees in earnest—there is no time to lose.

No change the spotted leopard, nor Ethiopian skin,
Has ever wrought to cleanse him:—Infected so with sin,
How can the German Kaiser, controlled by human hate,
Work out a reformation?—He fain should abdicate.

But, don't forget, we're coming—the battle-field we crave,
To show you how the hero dies, emancipate the slave;—
The vassal slave that serves you, nor dreams of liberty,
Will bless us for our coming, to know that he is free.

Written October 22, 1918.

YE BELLS OF LIBERTY.

Ring out, ye bells of Liberty, and sound the glad refrain,
The carnage o'er, the soldier's march is homeward, once again;
The strife has ceased, the bugle blast proclaims the nations free,
So, ring ye bells, the gladsome strain—the strain of Liberty!

Yes, ring one peal, the funeral knell to Hohenzollern rule,
Then ring again the joyful news, like children out of school:
The sound goes round—oh, give it wings, to fly the nations o'er!
May ocean's wave with joys lave, and roll from shore to shore.

Ring out, ye bells, O welcome note; again our Nation's free;—
The echo rings from pole to pole, on land, and on the sea:
It spreads the news, the welcome news—good news for you and me—
That Peace will reign—O glad refrain!—the reign of Liberty.

Oh, ring ye bells till earth resounds with Freedom's glad acclaim,
And Heaven echoes far and near—on land and sea the same—
The news of Peace, the bloodshed o'er—O Peace, your reign supreme!
Your flag unfurled will bless the world, the ransomed souls redeem.

Ring on till perfect Peace shall reign, alike, on land and sea,
And man can love his fellow-man, wherever he may be:
The laurels won, we fight no more, the carnage now must cease;
The sword now sheathed, again we turn, to live the life of peace.

The Prussian and the Russian Slav, now learn to war no more;—
Armenia, now, can serve her God, without the fear of gore:
All France is free, and England too, and fair Italia's plain;
The Turk now seeks to find no clue for terror's fearful reign.

The Teuton now can ground his arms—heroic Belgium, too,
Can march her bands throughout her lands, and build them all anew:
Let deserts blossom like the rose, and German matrons sing;—
Roumania's daughters now repose, protected by their king.

Some one was wrong, no need to say just who—the Kaiser knows—
He trembles now in Holland, aye, and dreads all kinds of foes;
His acts all stand, his deeds all rife, the ghost of all the slain,
And former subjects seek his life, but Peace alone must reign.

Ye heroes of our glorious cause!—You played a noble part,
Achieved for earth her liberty, before the flaming dart;—
All nations sing, "America," and feel their blood run free,—
So, ring no more the tocsin, now, ye Bells of Liberty.

Written November 12th, 1918, on receiving the news of the cessation of hostilities in the World War.

Miscellaneous Poems

THE HILLS OF LIFE.

I'm looking out before me, across the stretching plain,
To find this valley broken—no lofty hill appears—
I trudge along my pathway, I press with might and main;
The weary desert broadens to fill my life with fears.

Imagination lures me along life's gloomy tide,
I taste the inspiration from mountain's lofty height;
And then I press with vigor, and search from side to side,
But still no elevation to rise upon my sight.

Oh, is this life so dreary, and shall I never quite
Attain to its illusions, and satisfaction find?
Or, shall I still go groping in hope's illusive light,
My aching heart still pining to rest my weary mind?

Naught that we have we hope for, and naught we have but hope;
For nothing's worth the having when hope is satisfied:
I still shall keep on groping across life's narrow scope,
And look for hills refreshing to rise above the tide.

We climb the hills, enraptured, to view the scenes below,
We watch the valleys broaden, and see the harvests wave;
We view the golden landscapes—the streams in duty flow,
To add new life to beauty,—their sparkling waters lave.

But for the heights ascended, our vision seems so small,
These valleys mostly hidden, their beauty never seen;
And thus the smiling hill-tops invite us, one and all:
"Climb up, upon your journey, and view the living green."

Where is the soul that's pining for happiness and light?
Look up, God's sun is shining, to light your weary way;
Take courage and press onward, climb up the dizzy height,
And scan the fields of duty, to reach the perfect day.

And, if your way's a hard one, just climb the hill for rest,—
Remember, God is watching to guide your steps aright;
He marks the milestones traveled, and if you do your best,
His presence on your pathway will turn the dark to light.

Then, when you reach the summit and lift your weary gaze
Across the broad horizon, enraptured you will be,
To find your feet are lifted from out life's gloomy maze;—
With higher hopes inspiring, new summits you will see.

True, in the fertile valley, beside the rippling stream,
The tallest crops are growing, the sweetest flowers bloom:
And so, in sorrow's low-grounds, where hopes eternal dream,
Our highest inspirations are born in deepest gloom.

Our journey now behind us, we gain the summit's height,—
A hand Divine still beckons across the swelling tide:
Go on, ye weary pilgrims, where wisdom guides aright;—
Broad fields lie out before you, your vision clarified.

Written October 22, 1916.

SNIFFING THE ODOR.

There's one* in the Engrossing Office—the happiest man alive—
Fair maidens linger around him like the bees around the hive;
They strive to excell each other, in the flowers they present:
He sits and sniffs the odor till his nose has lost the scent.

He has bowed in recognition of each precious little pack,
Made speeches of acceptance till his brain is on the rack,
For phrases quite expressive of the feeling in his heart,
As each maiden comes all smiling, her flowers to impart.

He was born a happy gallant, he has cherished well the art,
But I fear these smiling maidens will rend his well-worn heart;
That organ has expanded to the limit of its powers,
To bless these happy maidens for all their smiles and flowers.

They seem to love him dearly, but like snows that come in May,
This lavish kind of affection has rarely come to stay;—
I'm looking ahead for trouble that I hope I'll never see—
Should these maidens once forget him—say, can that ever be?

Well, yes, it sometimes happens, I have known it in my day,
Just as you think you've won her, she has gone another way;
For maidens' minds are fickle, and change with many a whim,—
Whene're you think you are easy, be sure your chance is slim.

But why lavish on one such kindness, while others you neglect,
And leave them to grope in blindness, no flowers to expect?
There's a †Bard that dwells among you—the Bard of old Harnett—
But to see no flowers for him is source of deep regret.

I'm sure, if you'd practice upon him some of your wary wiles,
You'd set his heart athrobbing, and light his face with smiles;
You would set the muse agoing, and he'd toast you for your acts
With many a little rhythm in portrayal of the facts.

*From 1905 to 1915 Colonel M. D. Kinsland, of Haywood County, was the Engrossing Clerk in the House of Representatives of North Carolina.
During the Legislative Session of 1913, I stepped into his office one day and discovered a vase of flowers the ladies, connected with the office, had placed on his desk.
†Hon. Thomas W. Harrington, of Harnett County, an assistant in the office.

Now, come along sweet maidens, yes, never hesitate to come,
And bring your precious flowers—but give to Beaufort‡ some—
And be sure that the Bard of Harnett shall well remembered be;
Then toast my friend from Haywood—Will there be no flower for me?

‡Hon. B. F. Hooker, of Beaufort County, another assistant.
The circumstance furnished the inspiration for the above lines which were dedicated to the Engrossing Office with love and respect.

THE CITY OF THE OAKS.

The Session will soon be over, I shall see the country folks,
And leave the dear old City—The City of the Oaks—
Raleigh, dear old Raleigh, name ever dear to me,
Beside the historic River that murmurs toward the sea.

Her sires were brave and fearless, her sons were built for fame,
With mothers to fashion out their lives for glory's burning flame;
Her spires are pointing upward to guide her sons aright,
And nerve them for the conflict, in Freedom's cause to fight.

I shall leave you, dear old Raleigh, but my heart begins to swell,
When I think of a score of lasses I have learned to love so well:
For I surely love them dearly, and I wish we could always be
Roaming beside this River that murmurs toward the sea.

But from these lovely sirens Fate decrees that I should part,
Though to turn my back upon them will nearly break my heart:
We have roamed the hills together, and wandered o'er the lea,
Along the historic River that murmurs toward the sea.

But we shall roam no longer, I must bid you all adieu—
Others have claims upon me, but I'll come back to you;
Though you care but little for me—I guess that you are right—
But here's to you, dear Raleigh, and the girls for whom I write.

True, these Raleigh girls are coy, they can watch a fellow die
Of love or desperation—or both—and never ask him, Why
Not live a little longer, the dreary world to grace?
For well they know some other fellow is waiting for his place.

But girls, I'm going to leave you, you've done your worst for me,
Along the historic River that murmurs toward the sea;
And, if e'er a message from you should break upon my view,
And tell me that you love me, then I'll come back to you:

And we'll roam the hills together, as in the years gone by,
And gather the treasurers left us, where the rainbow quits the sky;
We'll gather the hidden treasurers that are left for you and me,
Beside the historic River that murmurs toward the sea.

Dedicated to the Enrolling Office of the Legislature of North Carolina, with love and respect.
1915.

SHE CAME ACROSS THE AISLE.

'Twas raining on last Sunday, and yet I went to church,
To hear the congregation's pastor sing and pray;
Expound the sacred Scriptures, pull sinners out the lurch,
Exhort the wayward members to keep the narrow way.

He took a text familiar, yes, "Blessed is the man
Who heeds no wicked counsel, nor blocks the sinner's way;
But loves the law as written"—like this the language ran—
"And meditates upon it from morn till morn each day."

One in the congregation—she sat across the aisle,
And sang the hymns so freely, in voice so sweet and clear;
Beneath a hat so shapely, her face a glowing smile,—
A soul so pure and happy, a life so full of cheer.

My weary soul was lifted, and Heav'n seemed close to earth,
As low the cadence echoed, each voice began to rise;
Each heart was filled with gladness like childhood's simple mirth,
The mellow notes were swelling—I know they reached the skies.

And when the songs were over, she came across the aisle,
And shook my hand so freely,—I clear forgot the choir—
She spoke in tones so gentle, each measured with a smile,
Her form so fair and lovely, it set my soul on fire.

Long as the soul loves music, and mem'ry holds the past,
And paints life's golden canvas with scenes of other years,
I'll prize the scene before me;—Say, can this vision last?
Or, shall it vanish from me, and fill my life with tears?

No, it shall linger ever, till time with me is o'er,
To keep my soul from pining, and fill my life with cheer;
To guide me up the stairsteps to Heaven's open door,
Where angel voices mingle in chorus sweet and clear.

Written July 22, 1916.

THE BOON FIRST STOLEN.

I see the clouds are rising,—a storm is in the air—
The battle lines are closing, around my friend from Dare:*
For one—a saintly maiden—of years I cannot score,
Shifts the blame upon him for what the ladies wore.

Peacemakers have a blessing, assured them in His Word,
For functions of their office—"The children of the Lord;"
So here we go Miss Harris,†—and you my friend from Dare—
Let's put our heads together, and settle what to wear.

Miss Harris is a maiden of years for commonsense;
And when it comes to verbage, she makes a strong defence;—
"Because the men demand it"—a reason, I declare,
For something of retraction upon the part of Dare.
"The men demand it ever—our object is to please
Their foolish whims and fancies—then why provoke and tease?"
A worthy object, surely, on which to lay your stress:
Then come along ye maidens, in any kind of dress.

It matters not for "Peek-a-boo"—whatever that may be—
'Tis the real, lovely maiden, I always wish to see;
And when this maiden passes—O Father Supreme forgive!—
If I shall look upon her so long as I shall live.

Come on my friendly bachelor, here is a chance for you,
A rare and lovely maiden—her charms are many, too:
She'll please you for your own sake, whatever you demand,—
Make you the happiest mortal, in all created land.

She's like the boon first stolen from Eden's blissful bower;
Though clad in dresses different, she's still alike in power:
She'll say no word, unless, perchance, you should some fault descry,
And raise complaint about her dress, because the skirts are high.

And now Miss Harris, lower your arms—here is a chance, you see—
Not wholly free from fault, I ween, but striving so to be;—
I see you'll meet his every need, and share his every care;
And so I leave him in your arms—Good by, my friend from Dare.

Raleigh, January 30th, 1921.

*Hon. B. G. Crisp from Dare County, North Carolina, who became somewhat impatient with the styles and fashions of the ladies dresses and published in the News and Observer a Bachelor's prayer from a Wyoming mountaineer.

†Miss Harris, of Raleigh, styles herself as an old maid and came back at him, supposing him to be a real bachelor. It was the Author's intention to pose as peacemaker and effect a reconciliation.

THE MOON WILL SHINE AGAIN.

In the waning month of summer—the storms had all gone by—
The moon above the hill-tops—serenely bright the sky—
Two lovers went a strolling, along the rippling stream;
Two hearts as one were beating—the silver waters gleam.

The blue was richly colored, the stars were shining bright;
Two lives in one seemed blended, in love's supreme delight:
They strolled far down the river, unconscious of the time,
Their voices mingling sweetly—the rippling waters chime.

Will took her hands so gently, and pressed them in his own,
And vowed of all things dear to him, no deeper love was known:
He pressed a kiss upon her lips—an arrow pierced his heart;
'Twas from the bow of Cupid that came this well-aimed dart.

The stars kept vigil o'erhead, the moon was climbing higher;
The song-birds hushed their music,—the glow of love's deep fire
Had lured them from their nestlings, far out the wooded dell,
To hear his living tongue unfold some deep and hidden spell.

"O, dearest of the dear to me!—I thought my life had failed,
But, if I've won one spark of love,—O happy mortal hailed!
Achievements, now, I crave no more, to perfect my delight;
Of earth's supreme felicity, I've reached the summit's height."

"Ah! Will, I love you dearly, I love you deeply too,
Let come whatever may in life, 'A friend I'll be to you';
I call the stars to witness, from out ethereal blue,—
As God looks on this heart of mine, He sees that it is true."

The Moon in highest glory—a smile come o'er her face—
She heard the same old story, as lovers did embrace;
She bade the heavens listen while lips were pressed on lips—
The pearly waters glisten, as care from memory slips.

They stroll far down the river, the birds all cease to sing;
Their hearts are filled with music,—old Time on fleetest wing,
Transports them to the fairy land, where flowers of youth abide,
And Love's soft whispers echo faint sounds of rippling tide.

The tide is rushing onward, the Moon now sinks to rest,
The ocean waves is swelling, but strangely heaves the breast:
Old Cupid's bow is bending—the moonlight guides his aim—
An arrow in each lover's heart—ah! two in Will's the same.

The strolling now is over, the years may come and go;
The wounds may heal, the aching cease, if Time shall creep but slow:
For Time's the one great healer for all the hearts of men;
He has in store some precious balm—The Moon will shine again.

Written to my friend, August 25th, 1917.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE PAST.

They sat beneath the cottage door,
  Where trailing vines entwine;
Two hearts with love were all aglow,
  Their thoughts seemed nigh divine.

The staid old earth, serenely clad,
  In pale moon's silv'ry rays,—
And two young hearts grew wild and glad,
  O'er themes of by-gone days.

They talked of scenes, long past and gone,
  When they were younger still;
And plucking flowers, passed alone
  Beside the church—Snow Hill.

Her cheeks were like the summer's rose,
  Her lips were Nature's sweetest;
Her face lent gold to sunset's close—
  A lovely form, the neatest.

Her heart was free—perchance the while
  She viewed the world before her;
Her face revealed the hidden smile,
  That made him still adore her.

In thrilling words he told his love,
  In willing ears that listened;
The shining stars looked from above,
  While pearly dew-drops glistened.

The mocking bird on fleetest wing,
  From out his leafy heather,
His throat attuned,—'twas made to sing—
  Went flitting o'er the meadow.

He sent his notes across the plain,
  In strange, though matchless power;
From hill to hill they catch the strain,
  From woodland dell, and bower.

Will's heart and life were freely laid
  On Hymen's flaming alter;
She took his hand and gently said,
  "Brave love, you need not falter."

"Just let your passion have its sway,
  Nor check your kindest feeling;
I can the strongest love repay,
  With love for its own healing."

Ah! years have come and gone since then,—
  They've gathered many flowers—
Each heart in each still trusts as when,
  They strolled o'er moon-lit bowers.

THIS HEART OF MINE.

O Heart of mine, what makes you ache?
  You've done no serious wrong—
Just loved a girl for pure love's sake,
  And loved her well and long;
But what of that, when passion's free?
  It is no heinous crime:
If she is willing, you should be—
  Just have a jolly time.

There is no use to mope around,
  And mourn to be forgiven,
When you the counterpart hath found,
  For which you've always striven;
Nor should you swell up in my throat,
  And choke me into spasms:
Just go adrift on love's frail boat,
  Across life's mighty chasms.

That fearful feeling of woe-be-gone,
  That sometimes reigns supreme,
Like winter's frost before the sun,—
  It mars love's roseate dream—
Will yield to hope, and leave you still
  The better for the trial;
With vision clear, and stronger will,
  One need not fear denial.

Now here you go, don't ache and pine,—
  The meadows bloom with clover;
Just take your way in rain or shine,
  Your time will soon be over:
And, if you chance to win the love,
  For which you've sometimes pined,—
You need not take your flight above—
  She still may change her mind.

But, if you fail, just let it go,—
  Some other gems will shine,
Far down beneath the water's flow,
  To lure you, Heart of mine:
And should another gain her love,
  'Tis hardly worth your own;
You need not care for those who prove,
  Some deeper love is known.

1916.

THIS SMITTEN HEART OF MINE.

What is it that swells this heart of mine,
  Whene'er she passes by,
And makes it ache, and throb, and pine,
  And no good reason why?

One magic touch upsets my life,
  And throws me out of gear:
A constant dread, and constant strife,
  Condemn my heart to fear.

Like fools, we sometimes love to play,
  Where dangers lurk the while,
And yield our friends an open way,—
  If but to gain one smile:

But then the sting that lingers yet
  Recoils on heart and brain;
The parting comes—can I forget?—
  'Tis this that gives me pain.

What makes this heart keep swelling so?
  'Tis not akin to grief:
Just why it aches, and beats so slow,
  Is past my own belief.

She comes around, she smiles on me,
  But who can understand
Her wily way, the mystery—
  The touch of her fairy hand?

That magic touch, her beaming eyes,
  Will kindle fires Divine;
I offer but one sacrifice—
  This smitten heart of mine.

To my friend, Daniel W. Terry.

WHEN FORTUNE CALLS.

There is a girl I used to see,
  The fairest one in Raleigh;
Her life was filled with merry glee—
  She surely was a jolly.

She sat and stroked upon the keys,
  The State was back behind her;
And if one came around to tease,
  Her smile was all the kinder.

She had her lovers by the score;
  For every one adored her:
If rich, or poor, they came galore,
  And often knelt before her.

I've seen her sit from morn till night,
  Amid the rush and prattle,
And strike the keys with all her might—
  She fairly made them rattle.

And when the day was fully done,
  And all had gone for honey,
She, wrapped in furs, was full of fun,—
  Her pockets full of money.

She helped the State enroll its laws—
  So much for every tally—
When work was done, there came a pause;
  And lovers then would sally.

I've seen their faces all grow grim—
  "Confound the luck forever—
That fellow's won, my chance is slim,
  Though she is awful clever."

Yes, this and more I've heard them say,
  When some one came and caught her;
And strolled along the narrow way,
  When they began to loiter.

I've heard from one of late who said,
  He'd been around to see her,
But found another in his stead—
  Her mind and heart was freer.

The jig was up, his cause was lost,
  He could but see and rue it;
He stayed too long—a fearful cost—
  Nor could he now undo it.

Poor man! he sighs in secret pain—
  He might have stood them better—
As he must do, who fails to gain
  A prize for which he's debtor.

And, if he had a chance, I ween,
  To mend the lost time slighted,
He'd cherish up her mem'ry green,
  Till they were both united:

But time, once lost, is gone for aye—
  Be wise, my friends, improve it;
When Fortune calls—oh, hear to-day!—
  Don't lose your chance and rue it.

Written in the Winter of 1916.

A FRIEND WILL TRUST HIS FRIENDS.

I know a girl I sometimes write,
  She has the finest ways:
Her face is like the sunbeams bright,
  In spring-time's sunny days.

I know her well, for now and then
  Her letters come to me;
The words just roll from off her pen,
  And ink as lavishly.

She says so many kindly things
  In praise of that I write,
My thoughts oft soar, as if on wings—
  She booms me out of sight.

Now, could I think she meant it all,—
  This siren song she sings—
I'd venture where the angels fall,
  Where Orphean lyre rings.

But—then I guess she only means
  To test my little skill—
Referring to the thrilling scenes,
  And things she writes at will:

For well she knows my turn of mind,
And how to move my heart;
How to the good I am inclined,
And where I would depart.

She knows full well the mead of praise
Will often wonders bring:
To charm the soul she means to raise,
She sometimes deigns to sing.

I'll try to match her wily schemes,
And pay in coin she sends;
I'll paint the color of my dreams—
A friend will trust his friends.

And, should I win, and sight the skies,
I'll shun the Orpheus fate;
In looking back he lost his prize—
I'll keep my own dear Kate.

Written in the Winter of 1916.

THE PAY-CLERK OF THE STATE SENATE.

O what a lovely girl you are,
With rosy cheeks and dark-brown hair,
And eyes reflecting Heaven's light,
Like stars that gild the darkest night.

O what a lovely girl you are:
Your charming sweetness knows no bar—
The purest angel off the throne—
Here, take this heart, 'tis all your own.

O what a lovely girl you are,—
Sweet gift to earth from realms afar—
Your face but dims the sun's own light:
To me you are a lovely sight.

O what a lovely girl you are,
With ne'er a frown your grace to mar:
The wide world o'er you have no match;
My heart's door swings, just raise the latch.

'Tis all your own with none to dare
Dispute the claim of one so fair:
Out goes the sceptre, come and see
The sacred place assigned to thee.

Senate Chamber, Raleigh, January 8th, 1921.

Miss Mabel Phillips was the Pay-Clerk of the State Senate during the Session of 1921, and at the end of each week brought around the checks, or vouchers, for the Clerks and members of the Senate.

One of these occasions furnished the excuse for writing the above lines, which, I confess, were inspired more by her rare beauty and extreme loveliness than by the Checks she brought; and which lines are most respectfully dedicated to her.

"JUST AN ORANGE THAT SHE GAVE ME."

I remember an Orange given,
Delicious, rare, and sweet;—
'Twas like the hand that gave it,
Though not so fair and neat.

'Twas so full of richest juices,
It nearly made me dance:
The fairy hand that gave it to me,
Its sweetness did enchance.

Just an Orange that she gave me,
Its flavor lingers still:—
Can I forget the hand that gave it?
No, no, I never will.

'Twas but a little act of kindness—
No paltered deal with art—
I'll ne'er forget the one who did it,
While mem'ry moves the heart.

Senate Chamber, Raleigh, January, 1921.

THE SYMPATHETIC HEART.

Of those who scrape the sky.
In easy seat she* sits alone;
The rushing days go by:
She listens to the weary tone

The first of her fair sex to grace
The Legislative hall;
While o'er her beaming, blushing face,
There comes a smile for all.

Her fairy brow in richest shades,
Of tresses flowing free.
Above the laces and brocades,
Recedes most gracefully.

If Nature lingered o'er her face,
Rare beauty to impart,
She did but trace with deeper grace
The sympathetic heart.

*Hon. Miss Exum Clement, Representative from Buncombe County, in the General Assembly of 1921. A Resolution of Sympathy for West Virginia over the loss of Capitol by fire was the first measure introduced in the North Carolina Legislature by a woman.

'Tis bad to be alone—too bad—
With none to share your care;
But, sure, he† is a lucky lad,
Who sits beside her there.

If he were banished from her side,
And I, in turn, could claim
The place where honors rare abide,
I'd sound the halls of fame.

But still he lingers undismayed—
His thoughts are in the air—
To play the role that Arden played—
The Speaker raps for prayer.

But when he's old, and no more Young,
And honors have departed;
Still may she move the crowds among,
To cheer the broken hearted.

Senate Chamber, Raleigh, January 12th, 1921.

EARNEST PETITION—PYGMALION'S GALATEA.

O, ye gods, so rich in kindness,
For ancient sculptor and his art;
As I grope my way in blindness,
Guide me to some fair maiden's heart.

One as perfect as that image,—
Brought to view in polished stone—
Pyg-ma-lion named fair Gal-a-te-a,
The while he chiselled out his own.

He labored long, yes, true and faithful—
Perfection wrought in every trace—
To shape the form and make it life-like,
To match the beauty of her face.

He wrought intensely, but with patience;
He watched each stroke upon the stone;
Then O ye gods, your richest blessing—
This is my love—this is my own!

Methinks I see perfection perfect;
In life, once hidden and unseen,
Forced from the gods by patient effort—
Supremest effort, still, I ween.

†Hon. Luke Young, her colleague from Buncombe County, North Carolina.

Thrice lucky, too, O Gal-a-te-a—
So carved in beauty's highest art;
For thus the eternal gods decreed,
That you should bear real maiden's part.

If Raphael's brush but dimly traces
Thy perfect beauty in his art,
It does but touch the deeper graces,
Soul-wrought in thy pure, gracious heart.

'Tis said his painting lives forever—
The sculptor's subject no more seen,—
Unless reflected in thy sisters—
True maidens of today, I ween.

Then, ye, who turned this stone to woman,
And gave her to him for his wife;—
Oh, could you give to me some omen,
To break the sadness of my life?

Senate Chamber, Raleigh, February 12th, 1921.

KISSING 'HIND THE SCREEN.

I passed along the street one night,
I rushed along at will;
I hurried through the arc's dim light—
'Twas cold, and bleak, and chill.

The crowd seemed going home from church,
And mostly on ahead,
Except a fellow and his girl;
But who,—I never said.

I was ten steps, or more behind;
He swung upon her arm,
And whispered low—but never mind—
I know he meant no harm.

She "kinder" leaned her head and ear,
To catch his every word,
And whispered something to him there—
Just what, I never heard.

They climbed the steps up to the door;
He pulled the screen aside,
And gazed around, behind, before,
As if he wished to hide.

A happy thought came o'er his mind—
I think, to her's as well—
The screen would answer for a blind,
With no one there to tell.

She stepped behind and held the door,
In attitude defying;
He ventured then upon the floor—
His courage justifying.

He kissed her once—twice o'er again—
And then I lost the count;
I could no longer there remain—
'Twas cold without a doubt.

Well, since they never knew I saw
This act upon the scene;
I know there is no human law
'Gainst kissing 'hind the screen.

The Lambeth* Law does not apply:
†Northampton has the floor;—
There is no harm to kiss Good-by,
When she's behind the door.

Senate Chamber, Raleigh, February 25th, 1921.

SONG OF THE MEADOW.

Go, work in my Meadow to-day,
For, see, there is rain on ahead,—
In the sunshine alway, is the time to make hay—
My cattle and mules must be fed:
Don't wait on the weather, nor play on the heather,
But go to my meadow, and work.

Yes, go to my meadow to-day,
The sickle is felling the grass;
Go, turn it all over, and mingle the clover,—
Get busy, don't let the time pass:
Don't fret me nor worry, but get up and hurry,—
Go, work in my meadow right now!

Go, work in my meadow, I say,—
Don't linger. Time's passing us by;
And clouds overshadow the sky:
There's rain on the mountains, it's swelling the fountains,
Don't drink to be merry, there's no time to tarry—
That hay will get wet, I'm afraid.

*Senator J. Walter Lambeth, from the Twenty-third District, introduced a bill to abolish kissing the Bible in taking oaths.
†Senator W. H. S. Burguyn, of the Third District—Northampton—opposed this bill very strongly, and did not want kissing abolished any way.

There's room in my meadow for you,—
  The sun shines, no longer delay;
Never dig in the mine, but just fall into line,
  And work in my meadow to-day:
You must never sidle, nor stand there and idle—
  Go straight to my meadow, I say.

Go, work in my meadow for pay,
  I need, and must have, some one there:
Don't wait for your honey, for I've got the money,—
  If willing, come work while it's fair,—
Don't wait for the flurry, but move in a hurry—
  That hay will be lost, I declare!

Go, work in my meadow, yes go,—
  It is work that I want—go now—
Don't sit there reclining, the sun will quit shining;
  Go, gather that hay in the mow:—
Just wait, it's all over, it rains on the clover,—
  The time to make hay has gone now.

My home is on an elevated knoll, surrounded by mountains, which lie out in the distance sufficiently far away to seem to form an unbroken range, or unbroken ranges rather.

In the summer time, when haying is the special order, I am quite often surprised to see rain coming down the slopes of the nearest range—one occasion of the kind during the summer of 1912 furnished the inspiration for the above lines.

THE LAND OF THE SKY.

Give me a home in the "Land of the Sky,"
  Where mountain peaks rise in giddy height;
Where Nature does with Nature vie,
  And stars send forth a richer light.

Give me a home where the air is pure,
  And brooks rush on from the crags and peaks;
Where Nature's voice and songs allure,—
  The voice of God in omnipotence speaks.

Give me a home where the towering hills
  Are clad in their beautiful garments of gold;
Where noisy brook in its music thrills
  The heart with youth that shall ne'er grow old.

Give me a home where the cooling springs
  Gush from the fern-covered hills of green;
Where God's own hand in profusion flings
  The hills and peaks, with a vale between:

Where the ranges of vision's outer view
  Are mellowed by the sun's absorbing light,
In deeper shades of the azure blue,
  Like the twilight zone of approaching night.

Where the maiden's blush and her envied kiss
  Inspire the soul for high endeavor;
And the fancied cares all end in bliss,
  And Love's deep fires still burn forever.

Where her fairy hand with a matchless grace,
  Smooths from the head, the heart, the brain,
The stains of sorrow, that have left their trace
  On the sin-crushed soul, till it's free from stain.

Written during the Special Session of the Legislature of North Carolina, in August, 1920, and respectfully dedicated to my good friend, Edgar Womble, to whom I am indebted, in part, for this inspiration.

SUNRISE IN THE PINES.

A blaze of gold lights up the hills,
  The morning star declines;
The King of day shoots forth his beams,
  'Tis sunrise in the pines.

The silent forest wakes to lights,
  More eloquent than words;
The song that comes from feathered throats,
  The tuneful forest birds.

The wood resounds their cheerful notes,
  In welcoming the day,
The starry host has disappeared,
  From fields of blue and gray.

The golden beam athwart the sky,
  In royal splendor shines,
Among the arching boughs of green,—
  'Tis sunrise in the pines.

O glorious dawning of the day,
  When gold with green combines,
To paint with rainbow-tint the hills,
  At sunrise in the pines.

The giant monarch of the hills,
  Autumnal gale defies,
Unfolding spiky plumes of green,
  Well pleasing to the eyes.

The weird moan of the gentle wind,
  The sighing of the breeze,
The song and hum of bird and bee,
  Is heard among the trees.

The drowsy hills and hollows wake,
  The rippling waters gleam;
The eagle from his airy crag,
  Sends forth defiant scream:

And bleating flocks and brown-eyed fawn
  Steal o'er the sun-lit hills;
And tinkling bells of browsing kine
  The dreamy distance fills.

O, glorious dawning of the day,
  Stretch forth thy beaming lines,
And flood Time's latest dawn with gold,
  At sunrise in the pines.

Written by my old friend, Thos. W. Harrington of sacred memory. Used here as a tribute to his memory.

DEATH IS THE WAY TO LIFE.

The flowers, dead and dying, are seen on every hand,
The blighting touch of winter has covered all the land;
The roses, long since vanished, perfume the air no more,—
Decay now claims her victims—their absence we deplore.

The autumn leaves so golden have left the trees all bare,
Lie on the ground in silence, decay's sad death to share;
Thus yielding all their beauty, they cease from Nature's toil—
Their strength and life extracted enrich the virgin soil.

The violets have withered, they lie in winter's grave,
Their sweetness still remembered—Can naught their beauty save?
The air we breathe is softened by fragrance rich and sweet;
To Nature's plan they're yielding—the law of death's complete.

Like violets that have faded, to give new life to earth,
And roses that have withered ere yet we know their worth;
Like leaves that have turned golden and left their native tree.
We yield the life that now is for life that is to be.

That higher life invites us to lay aside life's care;
For Heaven's joys celestial await us Over There:
We drop this mortal toil here,—'tis life's great sacrifice—
To gain a happy entrance in realms beyond the skies.

There Hope's sweet flowers blooming, and life that never ends,
The angel's 'wait our coming, and friends that have been friends;
The gate to life's bright portal, to joy that never fails,
Opes wide to all that's mortal, the weary trav'ler hails.

Yes, through this darkened valley where death doth reign supreme,
We make the one great sacrifice, taste life's ambrosial stream:
We reap the joys celestial, across the swelling tide,
And share in Hope's bright vision the fields of bliss so wide.

The way of death is gloomy, but 'tis the road to life;
It leads along the pathway where ends eternal strife:—
The wheat grain dies in silence, to germinate new grain,
And yield abundant harvests that men may reap again.

Though life seems sweet to mortals, 'tis sweeter still to die,
And pass the shining portals to realms beyond the sky:
We cling to life so fondly—we cannot well forgive;
But still in vain comparison—What is the life we live?

Death is the iron crucible in which all life is cast,
Where thoughts and deeds are tested, the gold refined at last;
It is the one great furnace, consuming all our dross;
It shows the perfect metal all free from sin and loss.

In this great laboratory, our acts must stand the test;—
If free and pure our motives, if we have done our best,
We'll hear the Master calling, "O come, ye sons of earth!
Come, cease from all your toiling—come, rest, I know your worth."

If flowers droop in sadness, and violets fade and die,
If hearts forget their gladness, here is the reason why:
New floral life and beauty must crown some future time;
And Heaven breathing in us, we'll live the Life Sublime.

Written November 2, 1917, while a six inch snow was on the ground.

OUR LIVES ARE FILLED WITH RAIN.

The rain descends, the torrents run,
Obscured the skies, the noonday's Sun
  Behind the clouds is hiding:
He veils his light where thick clouds meet,
No stars to guide our wand'ring feet,—
  But loneliness abiding.

Yes, all night long the dripping rain,
In ceaseless murmurs that remain,
  Still patters o'er the walls;
The day now comes, the drops renew,
The clouds hang low to break our view,—
  The shower unceasing falls.

The drops still wear the stones away,
We wait—impatient—as the day
  Recedes behind night's curtain;
When morning's herald loudly calls,
The constant dripping o'er the walls
  Proclaims, "It rains for certain."

Our hearts look up from silent homes,
For light, or joy—yes, all that comes,
  As gifts from a hand divine;
Our faith grows strong, the clouds dispel,
The Sun comes forth, our fears to quell,—
  And we see his face benign.

But shall the rain forever pour,
To keep us housed, no open door,
  And guard our feet from roaming?
Or, shall it cease in God's own time,
His Sun break forth with light sublime,
  To gild life's evening gloaming?

Yes, like the rain that fills our life
With sorrows, and with troubles rife,
  And saddens many a morning,
The clouds will rift, the rain will cease,
And Hope's bright bow will herald peace
  To the soul that heeds its warning.

Written during a continued rain, July 10th, 1916.

THE OLD YEAR, 1921

Good-by, Old Year, 'tis sad to part
  With friends so tried and true;
But still there's gladness in my heart,
  As Time rings in the New.

Glad, not that you have gone for aye,
  But that the New has come,
To light my path from day to day,
  And guide me to thy home.

Your kindness shown, I'll ne'er forget,
  While mem'ry warms the heart;
Nor yet till Time's last sun has set—
  It grieves me thus to part.

But then the New has ushered in,—
  My heart looks up with hope;
And, freed from every thought of sin,
    It scans life's narrow scope.

The Past is gone, it comes no more,
What's writ is writ for aye;
Its many wrongs we but deplore—
Help us to turn away!

The Present's all that we can claim—
Oh help us act aright!
Fast fly the moments just the same,
Into abysmal Night.

The Future lures our souls to rest,
Its treasurers never seen;
The promised Hope—life's sweetest zest—
Comes only as we glean.

Oh may we fill Time's flying hour
With deeds all free from sin,—
Not waiting for some hidden power,
But working, souls to win!

Good-by, Old Year, You're gone for aye—
Just touch thy hand in mine,
To lead me o'er life's rugged way—
I see thy smile Divine.

The many friends you've given me—
Time's sweetest gift to know—
In mem'ry still for aye to be—
As cycles come and go:

These many friends—ah precious friends—
Life's golden sheaves to me—
For all life's wrongs will make amends,—
Let come what is to be.

Good-by, Old Year, so true and kind;
Somewhere we'll meet again:
Eternity o'er I'll search to find
The realm where thou dost reign.

Our friendship fain I would renew,—
Thy blessings still I crave;
It pains me now to bid adieu—
We'll meet beyond the grave.

Written January, 1922.

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